

Supervisor Romaine and Town Board Oppose National Grid's \$174 Million Rate Increase for Gas Customers

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Town's strong position is declared in letter sent to NYS Public Service Commission

Farmingville, NY – In a recent letter to Kathleen H. Burgess, Secretary to the New York State Public Service Commission, Supervisor Ed Romaine declared the Brookhaven Town Board's opposition to National Grid's proposed \$174 million rate increase for gas customers. This increase would mean a 16% rise in gas costs with a pre-determined 10% National Grid profit margin for 2017. The Supervisor called the increase "astonishing," especially in light of the price of natural gas being at its lowest level in ten years. He also said that although proposed improvements to gas lines and storm hardening are commendable; ratepayers should not shoulder the cost.

In the letter, Supervisor Romaine commended the Department of Public Service's request to National Grid to reduce the increase by \$58.7 million and the profit margin to less than 9%. He called it "a good start," but asked for more "pencil sharpening" by the utility to reduce the rate increase to a more reasonable level. He also expressed the board's concerns about rising utility costs on Long Island that are partly responsible for driving away young families, seniors on fixed incomes and businesses in search of a lower cost of living.

Finally, Supervisor Romaine asked for a "better justification" of costs be presented to the commission, stating that National Grid "should not profit off the backs of hardworking Long Islanders who already find it difficult to make ends meet."

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